

DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship invites public to vote online through June 8 for best painted rain barrel in youth and adult art contests

DOVER – The public's art appreciation is sought in voting for favorite entries now online in the [2016 youth and adult rain barrel painting contests](#) sponsored by DNREC's Watershed Assessment and Management Section. Online voting is open and continues through Wednesday, June 8, for selecting this year's winning rain barrel artworks.

This year's adult and student entries – 10 entries for each category – will be on display for public viewing at the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village in Dover from Wednesday, June 1 through Tuesday, July 19. The grand prize winner in the adult division, chosen from among the five entries garnering the most online votes, will be displayed at DNREC's building at the Delaware State Fair in Harrington during the fair's run in July, and will be presented to the Governor during DNREC's annual awards ceremony on Governor's Day, Thursday, July 30.

The top five youth entries out of 10 selected for contest voting also will be displayed at DNREC's building during the Delaware State Fair, where they will be voted on again by fair visitors for best painted rain barrel. The five youth finalists also will participate in DNREC's Governors Day awards, with the overall winner to be announced during the ceremony.

DNREC sponsors the contests to educate the community on the benefits of using rain barrels to reduce rainwater runoff and improve water quality. Participants are chosen based on their applications and design ideas. Individuals or groups chosen each received a fully-assembled, primed 55-gallon plastic barrel, topcoat and bubble wrap; they supplied their own paint, brushes and other materials or tools. They then had five weeks to finish their artistry and submit final photographs and information, as well as a short biography of themselves.

Adult and youth entries will be used for educational projects and placed in public locations. Businesses, organizations and non-profit groups interested in displaying an artist's rain barrel at your facility, please contact Sara Wozniak at sara.wozniak@delaware.gov or 302-382-0335.

What is a Rain Barrel?

A rain barrel is a container that collects and stores the water from roofs and downspouts for future uses such as watering lawns, gardens, and house plants; cleaning off gardening tools; and washing your car. Rain barrels help lower your water bills, particularly in the summer months by collecting thousands of gallons of water a year. Rain barrels are also important for our environment because they help reduce water pollution by decreasing the amount of stormwater runoff reaching our streams and rivers. An average rainfall of one inch within a 24-hour period can produce more than 700 gallons of water that run off a typical house. This stormwater runoff picks up anything on the ground such as litter, excess fertilizer, pet waste, and motor oil, transporting it to storm drains that dump the untreated water directly into our waterways.

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